GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:28
ANSWERED ON:22.02.2001
IAF AIRCRAFT DEFENCE BASE DAMAGED DURING EARTHQUAKE IN BHUJ
BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB;DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of IAF aircraft and the Defence base damaged due to the recent earthquake in Bhuj, Gujarat;

(b) the details of crew members and their families killed therein and the amount of compensation paid to them;

(c) the quantum of other losses sustained in Defence sector therein and the relief package sent by his Ministry for the earthquake victims; and

(d) the steps being taken to protect air-base and aircraft in the country from such earthquakes in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 28 22.2.2001

No Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft was damaged at Airforce Station, Bhuj during the recent earthquake on 26th January, 2001 in Gujarat and no crew members or their families were killed and no compensation has been paid. However, details of persons killed/missing as on 14.2.2001 at Air Force Station, Bhuj are given below:

(i) No. of persons killed 29

(ii) Dependants 56

(iii) Ex-Service personnel 01

(iv) Civilians 03

Total 89

No. of persons missing

(i) Missing personnel 01

(ii) Missing Dependants 02

Total 03

No. of Unidentified Bodies 04

Grand Total 96

Though, no loss has been sustained due to damage to planes yet, the preliminary studies reveal loss of about Rs. 52.18 crores to building and other assets at Airforce Station, Bhuj. Besides this, Army installations, damaged at Bhuj due to earthquake would require about Rs. 40.40 crores for reconstruction/repairs, as per preliminary assessment. The relief work was immediately undertaken by the three Services of the Defence. Extensive damage to Navy`s buildings at INS Valsura, Jamnagar and Okha have been reported. One son of a Sailor also died in Valsura, Jamnagar. The assistance provided for relief operations by the Ministry of Defence is as follows:-

Army

The Army provided extensive help for evacuation and relief to the people. Approximately 21,500 troops were detailed in Gujarat for relief operations. The Army deployed heavy equipment like bull-dozers, generators and heavy vehicles in the relief operations. The relief operations covered evacuation of people buried under buildings and in all 478 persons were rescued and 2309 dead bodies recovered. Army relief teams visited 603 villages in all. 484 serious patients were evacuated for medical aid. The Army also distributed 2835 tents, 6600 blankets, 2000 tarpaulins and 5000 gloves and masks.

Navy

Naval relief operations consisted of deployment of 7 ships and 41 air sorties for providing relief material. Naval Surgical Teams treated 538 patients, and 2 ships were converted into hospitals. 7 Naval ships were deployed for transportation between Mumbai and Kandla. Over 250 tons of rations were transported to Kandla.

Air Force

Inspite of extensive damage to Air Force Station, Bhuj, the Air Force started relief operations within 6 hours of the earthquake in Bhuj. Till date the Air Force has provided 969 air sorties to evacuate and bring relief supplies to the affected people. A total of 4944 tons of relief material which consists of medical supplies, surgical equipment, food, equipment for relief operations, blankets, tentage, tarpaulins, vehicles, evacuation equipment etc. were air lifted. The Air lift was carried out from about 20 destinations from all over the country. 3 Air Force surgical teams operated on patients at Bhuj.

Armed Forces Medical Services

Armed Forces Medical Services provided major relief to injured persons by setting up field hospitals and bringing in Surgical Teams from outside. A total of 11332 operations were performed on seriously injured persons. 4 surgical teams were brought in from outside and approximately 700 units of blood was supplied by the Medical Services of the Armed forces. 10 Mobile Medical Teams were sent to remote areas.

National Cadet Corps

2500 cadets of the NCC were deployed in retrieving injured people from debris.NCC Cadets also acted as Nurses in Hospitals, provided help in Relief Camps set up, and were also deployed in security and traffic related duties.

Coast Guard

14 air sorties were provided by Coast Guard aircraft to Gujarat from Bombay.In addition 1 ship surveyed the coastal areas and provided relief to injured people. 2 medical teams were also deployed who attended to about 300 patients.

Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)

The DRDO supplied 1 ton of pre-cooked packaged food every alternate day for a period of 2 weeks.It also supplied infra-red cameras and ultra-sound detectors for detecting people buried under debris. It also supplied communication equipment like INMARSAT phones.

For the Airbases, additional safety reinforcements are being provided by the IAF, while designing the buildings, depending on the seismic zone of the Airbase. Besides this, the super structure of operating/storage hangar of aircraft is made of pre-fabricated steel sections. These structures are light in weight and can withstand stresses developed due to seismic activities. Further, in the design of blast pen `dynamic Values` of bomb blast are taken into account, and these structures can withstand the effect of earthquakes.